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ABSTRACT

This document provides updates on programs instigated by the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990. Individual sections present information on the following areas of educational improvement in the state: student performance assessment and accountability, early childhood programs, extended school services, primary school, professional development, school-based decision making, Family Resource/Youth Services Centers, the Educational Professional Standards Board, technology and education, governance, secondary vocational education, Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK), provisions for minority and at-risk students, and high school restructuring. Each section describes the basics of the law, developments for 1994-95, expected developments for the next several years, and what citizens and parents can do to help. Contact sources are provided. (LMI)

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The Prichard Committee
for Academic Excellence
and
The Partnership
for Kentucky School Reform

KERA Updates: Watch For...

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September 1994

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KERA UPDATES: WATCH FOR...

STUDENT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act establishes student learning as the key to school success. This is called a **performance-based** approach.

- Student learning goals were established by the legislature and were further defined by the **Council on School Performance Standards as 75 learner outcomes**. In May 1994, the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education adopted a shorter and clearer list of Academic Expectations for the public.

- The Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS) student performance assessments are being used to determine if schools are helping students meet the expected performance goals. They are **performance-based,** that is, they are different from the standardized achievement tests of the past.

- Each spring, beginning in 1992, **performance-based assessments** are used to test students' abilities in the areas of reading, mathematics, writing, science and social studies. They had been administered in grades 4, 8, and 12 but the 1994 General Assembly changed the assessments beginning in 1994-95 as follows:

Grade 4	writing portfolio transitional paper and pencil test performance events
Grade 5	mathematics portfolio
Grade 8	writing and mathematics portfolios transitional paper and pencil test performance events
Grade 11	transitional paper and pencil test performance events
Grade 12	writing and mathematics portfolio transitional paper and pencil test for purpose of equating to 11th grade in 1994-95 only.

- The 1992 assessments established a baseline for schools and will be compared with results from 1993 and 1994 to see if schools are making progress.

- Successful school performance will also include consideration of student attendance, dropout rates and successful transition to college, jobs or the military. These are called the **non-cognitive** indicators of school success.

- Each school has been given a **threshold** or goal for improving from the 1992 baseline scores. In 1994 schools that improve one point or more above the threshold will receive financial rewards. Scores will be finalized, and rewards given in the winter of 1995.

- In 1994-95, schools that do not reach the threshold but exceed the baseline must develop improvement plans. Schools that drop below the baseline by no more than five points must develop an improvement plan, will be assigned a Kentucky Distinguished Educator, and will qualify for improvement grants. Originally, schools that drop more than five points below the baseline would become **schools in crisis**. However, the 1994 legislature delayed the **school in crisis** sanctions until the 1995-96 school year. In these schools, plans must be developed, a Distinguished Educator is assigned, improvement grants are available, teachers and principals are placed on probation, and students will have the option of moving to other more "successful" schools. These schools now will be offered assistance from Distinguished Educators.

THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- The results of individual student assessments will be reported as novice, apprentice, proficient or distinguished.

- Transitional assessments will not include multiple choice questions.

- Students will continue to get report cards, although the frequency and format may change. At this time the KIRIS scores will not affect students' grades or ability to enter college, although some school districts are requiring completion of these assessments for high school graduation. Also, some colleges are accepting portfolios with applications for admission.

- This fall, results of the 1994 assessments will be released as follows:

  - In September, **transitional** assessment results will be released to schools, parents and the public.
  - In January, **performance events** and **portfolio** assessment results will be released.
  - In January, **school accountability scores for 1992-93** will be released.
  - In March, the new baseline scores and expected scores or thresholds for 1994-96 will be reported.

- Do not expect to see high scores in the first few years of testing, but look for steady improvement. In Kentucky, we have set a higher standard of expectation for students, and the new assessment results tell us what students know and can do compared to that higher expectation. The achievement tests used in the past only told us how well Kentucky students were doing compared to other students across the country. They did not tell us how well students were doing compared to high expectations.

- In primary school and grades 4, 5, 8 and 12 and frequently in other grades, teachers will keep **classroom portfolios** (working folders) of students' work in writing and/or mathematics throughout the year. This work should become part of the student's regular classroom work rather than additional assignments. In the spring, teachers and students will select the best pieces of work for the final **portfolio**. Beginning this year, primary students must complete one portfolio entry before they move into the fourth grade, and high school students must begin to work on math portfolios in grade 9.

- Many schools have chosen to give students similar assessments in grades other than 4, 8 and 12 to measure the progress and learning needs of students between the accountability assessment grades. These are called "continuous assessments."

- The schedule for the spring 1994 assessments is as follows:

Feb. 6-24	Grade 9 through 12 transitional assessments
March 24	Writing portfolios completed in grades 4, 8, and 12
Feb. 27-March 10	Grade 11 performance events
March 17	Math portfolios completed in grades 5, 8 and 12
April 10-28	Grade 4 performance events
April 17-May 5	Primary through grade 8 transitional assessments
April 24-May 12	Grade 8 performance events

- Expect to see teachers, principals and school councils begin to change curriculum and instructional methods. What has been done in the past has not worked for most students. Classrooms should begin to change.

- The Department of Education is preparing content standards for schools to help focus the curriculum in specific areas that students need to know. The KIRIS assessments will cover these content areas.

- College entrance officials are beginning to express increased interest in student writing and problem solving. The SAT college entrance exam is currently undergoing changes that will allow students to demonstrate their problem-solving skills through open-ended mathematics questions which require them to calculate their own responses.

DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, WATCH FOR...

- The first announcements of school success will be made early in 1995, when school accountability scores will be available for the first comparison. At that time school rewards or need for assistance will be determined.

- Performance assessments will become a more important part of the curriculum and instruction, with teachers guiding student learning and assessing on a regular basis through performance events, portfolios and written assessments.

- Paper and pencil tests will include fewer multiple choice questions and more essay and open-ended questions. Actual student work in **events** will be evaluated -- all focusing on more **performance-based** assessments.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» **Be patient**. Teachers are learning what the new performance outcomes and assessments mean for their students and ways of teaching. It will take time for them to determine how to change to help students meet the new goals. That is why the legislature delayed the **school in crisis** sanctions until 1995-96.

» **Ask** your school to hold meetings this fall to explain the new assessments to all parents. Be sure to attend and encourage other parents to attend.

» If you had 4th, 8th or 12th grade students last year, assessment results will be available in September. **Make an appointment** to see last year's teachers, counselors or principal so they can show you how your child did and where he or she needs improvement. **Remember**, on the new assessments, students will not be failed but will be shown where they are in relation to the expected goals. The schools then will be working with students to make progress toward those goals.

» **Talk** with students and teachers about portfolios and performance events to see what they are experiencing. Ask students how they will decide what goes into their final portfolios.

» **Ask** to see your child's working portfolio and ask what you can do to help.

» If your school has a school-based decision making council, ask about school council plans to help all students make progress toward improvement. **Find out** how comfortable teachers are with the new assessment program.

» If your school has a PTA/PTO/PTSA, **ask** them to have a program on the KIRIS assessments to help parents understand what to expect. Ask that actual performance events be included. If you do not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office -- (502) 564-4378 for help.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they hold an information session on the KIRIS assessments. **If there is no Community Committee, form one**. Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

» **Recognize the contributions** of teachers and administrators and let them know you appreciate the amount of work it takes to establish the new assessment system. Changing classroom practices requires teachers and administrators to think differently about what they do, and it takes time and effort.

» **Attend** local school board meetings and ask about board plans to improve student performance and provide teacher training.

» **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or difficulties with the KIRIS assessment program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) or the Kentucky Department of Education Office of Assessment and Accountability Services at (502) 564-4394 or (800) KDE-KERA or the Regional Service Center in your area. See pages 15 and 16 for a list and phone numbers. Beginning in October 1994 a toll-free line will be available just for questions about KIRIS assessments. The number is 1-800-KIRIS99.

Notes:

Notes:

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 requires school districts to offer developmentally appropriate early childhood programs for 4-year-old children at risk of educational failure and 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities.
- To participate as a 4-year-old at-risk student, children must be eligible for the federal free lunch program. Any child 3 or 4 years old, who has a disability, may participate regardless of family income. Other children may enroll if space is available.
- School districts are encouraged to include all 4-year-olds if resources are available.

THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- All school districts will provide preschool programs to eligible children, often in collaboration with Head Start.
- Parents will be more involved in these programs, because of greater emphasis on outreach to parents.
- More eligible children will be served because of greater local efforts to reach other children.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

- **Talk** with students and parents who are participating in early childhood programs about what is happening in preschool programs.
- If you have a child or know of children who might be eligible for these programs, **call your local board of education** offices to see if those children can participate.
- **Visit** preschool and local Head Start programs in your community.
- If teachers in your program are visiting students and parents at home, **ask** how that is working to help students be prepared for school.
- If your elementary school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** how they will incorporate the preschool program into the school plan.
- If your school has a PTA/PTO, **ask** what they can do to support the preschool program and those students and parents who will be entering your primary school. Suggest a mentor or partner program for new preschool parents, including those from Head Start.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they visit preschool programs in your district to learn more about them. **If there is no Community Committee, form one.** Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

» **Volunteer** to help a teacher in a preschool program.

» **Recognize** teachers and administrators and let them know you appreciate their contributions in the development of preschool programs.

» **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members what they think of the preschool programs and how the program is working in your district.

» **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes and difficulties.

» If you believe qualified students are not being served, talk with your district school officials. If students are still not served, call the Office of Education Accountability, (800) 242-0520.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) or the Kentucky Department of Education Division of Early Childhood in Frankfort at (502) 564-7056.

Notes:

EXTENDED SCHOOL SERVICES

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- Extended school programs are designed to provide additional instruction or support services to help children meet performance goals.
- The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 requires that each school district provide extended school services to meet students' learning needs.
- Extended school programs take many forms: after-school tutoring, evening sessions, Saturday activities or summer programs. Times may vary, depending on students' needs.
- Eligibility for these services will be determined by the district, based on students' needs for additional time to meet performance goals.
- Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and special education programs will continue. In fact, some students participating in those programs and the extended school program will benefit from both efforts.
- The extended school services program is an intervention model, rather than a remedial model. In other words, services are intended to help students when they need it, not wait until they fall behind.
- Districts receive state monies for extended school services.
- Extended school service programs throughout the state currently serve over 100,000 students each year.

DURING THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- $32.6 million was available to school districts during the 1992-93 year and $33.8 million was available for 1993-94 to provide extended school programs. In 1994 the legislature allocated $34.1 million for 1994-95 and $34.2 million for 1995-96.
- Extended school services programs will focus more on helping students with specific learning outcome goals based on the results of the spring assessments.
- An increasing number of students will receive early intervention through extended school services programs to prevent failure rather than waiting for failure to occur.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» **Talk** with students and parents to learn more about how the extended school services programs in your district are helping students.

» If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** how extended school services fits in with plans for the school. Suggest a committee on extended school services and volunteer to be a member. Ensure that all parents have a voice in the extended school services programs being provided.

» If your school has a PTA/PTO, see how it can help support extended school services.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they visit extended school programs in your district to learn more about them. **If there is no Community Committee, form one.** Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

» **Volunteer** to be a teacher's aide or tutor in an extended school services program.

» **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators, and let them know you appreciate their contributions toward establishing good extended school services programs.

» Be sure your extended school services programs are instructional programs, and not study halls.

» **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members how they have used extended school services to help students in your school district and what is planned for the coming year.

» **Encourage** your local board to provide transportation for students in the extended school services program.

» **Write** to your elected officials with examples of successes and weaknesses in extended school services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) or the Kentucky Department of Education, Extended School Learning Branch in Frankfort at (502) 564-3678 or the Regional Service Center in your area. See pages 15 and 16 for a list and phone numbers.

Notes:

PRIMARY SCHOOL

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 requires school districts to replace grades kindergarten through 3 with a **primary school program.** The law called for programs to begin with the 1992-93 school year and be fully implemented by 1993-94.

- The 1992 General Assembly listed the following **"critical attributes"** in further defining primary school:

  - **developmentally appropriate educational practices** or teaching in ways children learn best according to their age and development;
  - **multi-age and multi-ability classrooms** or having children of different ages and abilities working together;
  - **continuous progress** or allowing children to work and progress at their own pace, not having to wait for other children to catch up or be pressured because other children are waiting on them;
  - **authentic assessment** or testing students' abilities by having them actually show they know or can do something;
  - **qualitative reporting methods** or letting parents know what students know and can do, rather then giving an A, B, C, D or F in each subject;
  - **professional teamwork** or teachers working together to help students learn; and
  - **positive parent involvement** or working with and involving parents in positive ways, not just when a child is having difficulty.

- The 1994 General Assembly adopted a law re-emphasizing the flexibility schools have in grouping primary students. The law says, ". . . based on individual student needs, that implementing multi-age and multi-ability classrooms need not apply for every grouping of students for every activity throughout the entire day." Students must be involved in multi-age and multi-ability groups but it does not need to be all day and must be based on the learning needs of the students.

- In a **primary school program**, the curriculum matches the individual student's ability without identifying the student as a first grader, second grader, and so on, and students are helped to progress at their own pace.

- Primary programs are intended to help **all** students progress at their own speed. That includes children who are gifted, have learning differences or disabilities, or who are at risk for educational failure.

- Last year, all schools should have changed their classrooms using some or all of the critical attributes. All schools have been required to write plans for their programs.

DURING THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- Each elementary school must implement the primary school program.

- Classrooms may look very different:

  - tables or desks are moved together so children can work in small groups;
  - hands-on material is used to help children learn to measure and count or learn science concepts;
  - comfortable reading areas are arranged where children might sit on the floor or on comfortable furniture;
  - students talk together about things they are learning;
  - students are writing more;
  - science learning centers are created;
  - children help other children;
  - report cards look different and are more detailed, and
  - children are encouraged to read lots of books; textbooks may be used less.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» If you have a child in the primary program, **attend** any information sessions explaining the program and all parent-teacher conferences. Ask how your child is progressing, what you can expect and how you can help.

» If you have a preschool child, **attend** information sessions about the program and make arrangements to visit some time during the school year.

» **Ask** teachers how you can help them.

» If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** council members what they are doing to support implementation of primary schools. Volunteer to be a member of the council committee on primary schools.

» If you have a PTA/PTO, **ask** for or plan a program to help parents understand primary school programs. If you do not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help at (502) 564-4378.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they visit primary school programs in your district to learn more about them and find out what they could do to help. **If there is no Community Committee, form one.** Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

» **Encourage** PTA/PTO, parents and community to help teachers supply their primary school learning centers and develop materials for these new programs.

» **Volunteer** to be a teacher's aide or tutor in a primary school classroom.

» **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators and let them know you appreciate their work in primary school programs. Recognize their successes and frustrations in developing new classroom approaches.

» **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask what the district is doing to support primary school programs.

» **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or difficulties.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) or the Kentucky Department of Education Office of Learning Programs Development (Primary School Branch) in Frankfort at (502) 564-3064 or the Regional Service Center in your area. See pages 15 and 16 for a list and phone numbers. You might want to purchase **The Primary School: A Resource Guide for Parents**, a publication of The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform. Call (800) 928-2111 for order information.

Notes:

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KERA UPDATES: WATCH FOR...

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 makes professional development of teachers and other certified employees a priority.
- Teachers and other certified employees have a wide range of opportunities for professional development.
- During the past three years, all school districts were required to join with other districts to form groups or "consortia" and work together to provide in-service for teachers.
- During the 1993-94 year, the state provided about $16 per student to each school district for professional development. For the 1994-95 and 1995-96 years that amount has been increased to $25 per student.
- Superintendents are required to complete a training program and assessment center process set up by the state Department of Education. Finance and school law are two primary topics. This became effective as of July 1994.
- All principals must successfully complete a new training and assessment process in order to qualify to be a principal. This became effective in July 1994.

DURING THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- Professional development, resource information and support will continue to be available through Kentucky's eight regional service centers:

Region 1: Murray State University, Calloway County
(502) 762-3217
Region 2: Western Kentucky University, Warren County
(502) 745-6550
Region 3: Jefferson County Schools/Gheens Academy, Jefferson County
(502) 473-3494
Region 4: Northern Kentucky University, Kenton County
(606) 572-6930
Region 5: University of Kentucky, Fayette County
(606) 257-4907
Region 6: Corbin, Whitley County
(606) 523-9821

Region 7: Morehead State University, Rowan County
(606) 783-5372
Region 8: Prestonsburg, Floyd County
(606) 886-0205

Specialists in these regional service centers can provide consultation on primary programs, school-based decision making, curriculum assessment and technology.

- During the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years, districts may take up to five days of the 175 instructional days from the school year for professional development for teachers.

- Beginning with the 1994-95 school year, school-based decision making councils will have responsibility for determining how professional development funds are spent at their school.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» **Ask** teachers and principals what their experience has been with professional development and whether it has been meaningful or helpful. Ask if there is anything you, your PTA/PTO or school council can do to be helpful.

» **Ask** if you can sit in on professional development sessions in areas of particular interest to you.

» **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members about the consortium they have formed with other districts, whether it has been helpful or has saved money in providing professional development for their teachers, and whether they intend to continue working with the consortium. Let them know what you have learned from teachers, good or bad.

» **Ask** your school council how they plan to use their professional development funds. Volunteer to serve on the committee that makes those recommendations to the council.

» **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or problems.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they study the issue of professional development in your district to learn more and find out what they could do to help. **If there is no Community Committee, form one.** Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) or the Kentucky Department of Education Office of Learning Programs Development (Division of Professional Development) in Frankfort at (502) 564-2672 or the Regional Service Center in your area.

SCHOOL-BASED DECISION MAKING

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- School-based decision making is a shared process in which the local school becomes the place where most of the policies and plans for schooling occur. This form of participatory management is essential to the success of the state's education reform.

- School-based decision making gives teachers, the principal and parents in local schools the authority to determine the direction for their schools.

- School-based decision making was enacted to help students be better educated, by letting the people closest to the children make decisions about helping those children learn.

- School councils usually include six people: the principal (who acts as chair), three teachers (elected by teachers) and two parents (elected by parents).

- The 1994 General Assembly added:

  - a requirement that assures representation of minority parents and teachers in schools that have eight percent or more minority students;
  - a provision that allows all parents in the school, not just members of the parent-teacher organization, to vote for parent members;
  - a requirement that councils that form committees establish policies to facilitate the involvement of parents, classified staff members (secretaries, cafeteria workers, custodians, etc.) and other interested persons on council committees;
  - the option of having up to two-year terms for members without the ability to hold successive terms; and
  - the responsibility to determine how to spend professional development funds.

- Each school council makes decisions on;

  - curriculum;
  - instruction and instructional materials;
  - assignment of students and space;
  - daily schedule;
  - discipline and classroom management;
  - extracurricular programs and policies, and
  - school budget, including professional development funds.

  In addition, when there is a vacancy, the council selects the principal and consults with the principal in hiring teachers and other personnel.

- School councils set policies, but principals continue day-to-day operation and management of the schools.

- The local school board sets guidelines for the formation of school-based decision making in the school district.

- Schools can establish councils as soon as two-thirds of the teachers at the individual school vote to adopt school-based decision making. By the 1990-91 school year each school district had to have at least one school participating in this process. By July 1, 1996, virtually all schools must be managed by school councils.

- School faculty members can choose not to use school-based decision making if the school exceeds its threshold on the KIRIS assessments. In addition, there are eight schools that are exempt from the school-based decision making requirement because they are the only school in the district. They may opt to use school-based decision making if their district policy allows it.

DURING THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- Over 725 schools are participating in school-based decision making by establishing school councils. That means over 2,175 teachers and 1,450 parents are involved in making important school decisions.

- School councils are beginning to rethink how students are taught as they work to meet the KIRIS assessment threshold, so things should begin to change radically in some schools.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

- **Get involved**. If your school has a school-based decision making council, run for a school council seat or volunteer to serve on a council committee. Attend council meetings and share your opinions with your parent and teacher representatives. Encourage and support their work.

- **Work** to see that you elect parent and teacher representatives to your school council who care about all the children in the school. People who have one gripe or one issue in mind usually do not make the best council members.

- If school-based decision making is not used in your school, **talk** with teachers and principals to understand what they are thinking about SBDM. Encourage them to consider voting for it.

- If there is a PTA/PTO in your school, **ask** for programs to help parents understand more about SBDM. If there is no PTA/PTO in your school, form one. A PTA/PTO can help inform parents and work to elect good council members. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help, (502) 564-4378.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they attend school-based decision making council meetings in your district to learn more about them and find out what they could do to help. **If there is no Community Committee, form one.** Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

» If you have a school council, consider joining the new Kentucky Association of School Councils and attending their February 1995 conference. For more information call (606) 238-2188.

» **Recognize** the contributions of teachers, administrators, parents and school board members in establishing school councils and working to improve your school. Let them know you appreciate their contributions and hard work.

» **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members how they are supporting school councils to help them make the best decisions for students.

» **Write** to your elected officials and let them know how school-based decision making is working in your school. Give them specific examples of successes and problems.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849), the Kentucky Department of Education, Division of School-Based Decision Making in Frankfort at (502) 564-4201 or the Regional Service Center in your area. See pages 15 and 16. The Kentucky PTA has a useful handbook on school-based decision making. Call 502-564-4378 for a copy. You may also wish to purchase a copy of ***School-Based Decision Making: A Guide for Council Members and Others*** or ***A School Budget Primer: Citizens' Guide to School Finance***. For more information call The Prichard Committee.

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KERA UPDATES: WATCH FOR...

FAMILY RESOURCE/YOUTH SERVICES CENTERS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 recognizes that students face social, economic, family and health problems that interfere with learning. In the years 1991-1996, resource centers are to be established in schools where at least one-fifth of the students qualify for free school meals, to help students and families get help with those problems.

- Family Resource Centers are located in or near schools serving students under 12 years of age. Youth Services Centers serve students 12 and older. Upon recommendation of the Interagency Task Force on Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, grants from the state Cabinet for Human Resources fund the centers.

- The coordinators at the centers identify problems and link students and families to local resources and agencies that might be able to help, so students can be more ready to learn.

- Policies and procedures for launching the centers have been developed by the statewide Interagency Task Force on Family Resource and Youth Services Centers.

DURING THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- Seventy-five new Family Resource and Youth Services Centers have been established, bringing the total to 455 centers, serving 752 of the 1129 eligible schools.

- Resource centers are guided by local advisory councils which must include parents, service providers and educators. Students serve on councils for youth services centers.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» **Volunteer** to participate on a Family Resource or Youth Services Center Advisory Council.

» If your school qualifies for a center, but has not received a grant, **volunteer** to participate on the grant writing council for a proposal.

» **Talk** with students, parents and teachers to learn what needs they see in their schools that might be helped by a service center.

» If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** council members what their plans are for coordinating with or establishing a center.

» **Volunteer** to help your center. See what needs you, your church, or other organizations can help provide.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they visit Family Resource and Youth Services Centers in your district to learn more about them and find out what they could do to help. **If there is no Community Committee, form one.** Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

» **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask what their plans are for submitting future proposals.

» **Write** to your elected officials with examples of successes or problems with Family Resource and Youth Services Centers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) or the Cabinet for Human Resources, in Frankfort at (502) 564-4986.

Notes:

EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Education Professional Standards Board is responsible for establishing teacher training and certification standards for all educators who work in schools.
- An alternative training program allows experts and professionals who have college degrees but not education degrees to become classroom teachers by completing a state-approved program at the district level. This is intended to encourage highly-skilled and knowledgeable persons to enter teaching more easily, especially in areas where there are shortages.
- The Board has the authority to investigate and hold hearings with the potential to revoke teaching and administrator certificates for just cause. Last year the Board handled 126 cases.
- The Education Professional Standards Board has developed a list of expected outcomes for new teachers.

DURING THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- Regulations for alternative training programs have been established. Four school districts have established such programs.
- Teachers, colleges and universities have begun talking about changing the way teachers are prepared to work in Kentucky schools with the new reform programs in place.
- Last year the Governor's Task Force on Teacher Education discussed specific proposals for reform. The Education Professional Standards board is continuing to work in these areas:
  - Clinical training sites: 10 planning grants have been awarded as part of Goals 2000;
  - Revised university allocation of funds;
  - Streamlined certification: the board has reduced the number of specialty certification areas from 156 to 26. Certification assessments for specialty areas like math or English are being developed. Early childhood will be piloted this year, and
  - Transformed advanced degree programs and staff development: the Board has established a committee to develop protocol for ways to allow teachers to get credit for staff development time.
- The Board has taken steps to increase the recruitment and retention of minority educators in Kentucky schools.
  - a new Minority Education, Recruitment and Retention Division has been established in the Department of Education;
  - nineteen minority teachers have graduated this year from the alternative program;

- scholarship funds for minority teachers have doubled from $100,000 to $200,000 for the 1994-95 school year, and
- 10 new middle school and high school programs have been established to work with students early to encourage them to consider teaching as a career.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» If your school or school district has a need for teachers in special areas, suggest they consider developing an alternative training program.

» **Speak well** of teaching as a profession. Encourage talented young people, both male and female and of all ethnic backgrounds, to consider teaching as a career. Recognize good teaching in your school and school district.

» If you know people at colleges of education and in other colleges at universities, ask what they are doing to change the way teachers are prepared in the future and how they are helping in the schools.

» **Report** persons holding teaching certificates (teachers, administrators, principals, superintendents) whom you believe to be guilty of immorality, misconduct or incompetency, to the Office of Education Accountability (800) 242-0520.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) or the Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Teacher Education and Certification in Frankfort at (502) 564-4606.

Notes:

KERA UPDATES: WATCH FOR...

TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education adopted a master plan as required by Kentucky school law. The purpose of technology is to improve learning and teaching and facilitate administrative functions, such as financial reporting, school attendance, drop-out information and so on.

- The Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) is spelled out in a master plan, an implementation plan and technical standards that have been sent to each school district. Implementation began July 1, 1992.

- Technology includes computers, telephones, telecommunications, interactive televisions, low-power televisions, satellite and microwave communication.

- Standards for the purchase of technology have been established and the state has bid for equipment to get the best possible price for technology purchases. State matching dollars can only be used for equipment that meets KETS standards.

DURING THIS YEAR ('94-95), WATCH FOR...

- School districts must prepare and submit a plan for the use of technology in their district. The plan must comply with the state master plan and be approved by the state before state funds can flow to the district.

- School districts will be able to purchase technology equipment and instructional software with state and local dollars. Local funds will be matched by state funds. A total of $27.4 million will be available during the 1994-95 school year and $26.4 million next year.

- Implementation of the district administrative system will be in full use in the pilot district, Shelby County, this year. Over the next two years, all districts will be added to the system.

- The statewide network for instructional purposes, that will link schools with other schools and other instructional resources will be fully operational by June 30, 1996.

- Professional development for school technology coordinators will continue. This year a Principal's Institute will be held in January, providing information for principals.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» **Find out** what is happening with technology in your school or school district. Is there a district plan? If not, ask who will be working to develop one. How many computers are available to students? How much time does each student get to work on a computer each week? When will your district be connected to the statewide network for instructional and administrative purposes?

» To learn more, **review** the district plan and the KETS Planning Workbook, which are also available on diskette, for:

- Staff technology competencies and professional development for teachers;
- Integration of the technology with learner outcomes;
- Role of technology in assisting students achieve the learner outcomes;
- Curriculum strengths and weaknesses, and
- Utilization of technology purchased prior to the KETS program in combination with the new equipment.

» If you are able to access a computer and modem, **join the Education Technology Assistance Center Bulletin Board System (ETAC BBS)**. This system links Kentuckians--educators, parents, community leaders, and anyone who wants to know more about up-do-date KETS negotiated prices, KETS standards and information updates. Outside Frankfort, dial (800) 884-1758. In Frankfort, dial 564-3379.

» **Talk** with students about the technology that they are exposed to or know about. Ask them how much time they spend on computers, do they see educational programs on television and what do they think about them?

» If your school has a school-based decision making council, ask what the council's plans are for technology. Suggest a committee on technology and volunteer to be a member of that committee.

» If your school has a PTA/PTO, **ask** what they can do to help. If there is no PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help (502) 564-4378.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they study the technology plan for your district to learn more about it and find out what they could do to help. **If there is no Community Committee, form one.** Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

» If you have computer expertise, **volunteer** to help by tutoring students or helping develop the local district or school plan.

» **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators in developing technology in your school or district and let them know you appreciate their contributions.

» **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask board members what their goals are for technology in the schools and what they are planning to help teachers learn how to use technology in their teaching.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849) or the Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Learning Programs Development, Office of Education Technology in Frankfort at (502) 564-6900 or the Technology Assistance Team at the Regional Service Center in your area. See pages 15 and 16.

Notes:

Notes:

GOVERNANCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- Governance -- or who is directing our schools in Kentucky -- plays a critical role in the success of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990.
- The Kentucky Education Reform Act provides for shared leadership and a bottom up versus top down system. That means more decisions are being made at the local level, not the state level.
- For example, school-based decision making allows the teachers and parents in the school the opportunity to make decisions for their students.
- The Kentucky Department of Education was reorganized in 1991 and has established eight regional service centers. See pages 15 and 16. A toll-free number (800-KDE-KERA) is maintained by department staff to answer questions.
- Legislative oversight of reform is being directed by the Office of Education Accountability in the Legislative Research Commission. A toll-free number (800-242-0520) is available to report concerns or ask questions.
- District level governance focused on the areas of employment practices, political involvement and anti-nepotism provisions, which include:
    - In most cases, a superintendent's relative cannot work in the school district unless he or she was hired before the reform was passed and had proper certification for the job.
    - A principal cannot employ relatives at his or her school, but relatives employed before July 1990 are exempt under current law.
    - School board members cannot ask school employees for campaign contributions or services.
    - When there is a vacancy on the school board, the state commissioner of education appoints members to serve until the next election.
    - The local school board still hires the superintendent -- with assistance from a screening committee that includes two teachers, a principal, a local school board member and a parent. However, the school board could pick someone not recommended by the committee.
    - The school board can, by four-fifths vote and approval of the state education commissioner, break a superintendent's contract for cause.

- The local school board continues to: decide when and where to build new school facilities; provide services; hire the superintendent; manage all school funds and property for the district; set rules and regulations for school property management; transact business for the district, and establish qualifications for all employees.

- Local school boards and superintendents continue to create guidelines and general requirements for school operations. However, with school-based decision making, the school councils will make curricular and instructional (what is taught and how) decisions for each local school.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» If your school has a school-based decision making council, **run** for a school council seat or volunteer to be a council committee member. If there is no PTA/PTO in your school, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help (502) 564-4378.

» **Organize** a Community Committee for Education in your community. Contact The Prichard Committee for assistance at (800) 928-2111.

» **Support** superior performance from school board members, administrators and teachers.

» **Encourage** good candidates to run for school board offices or apply for appointment when vacancies occur between elections.

» **Attend** local school board meetings. Be informed about local school board elections. Vote.

» If you have questions about whether the law is being followed in your district, **talk** with your principal, superintendent or school board members. If that does not correct the problem or answer your questions contact the Office of Education Accountability, 800-242-0520.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Contact The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111, the Department of Education Office of Legal Services at (502) 564-4474 or the Office of Education Accountability at (800) 242-0520.

Notes:

KERA UPDATES: WATCH FOR...

SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 provides opportunities for all students to develop academic and occupational skills while they prepare for post-secondary education, the workforce or the military.

- The purpose of vocational education is to develop problem-solving, basic and advanced academic skills in a technological setting and to provide experience in all aspects of the industry the students are preparing to enter.

- Students may participate in authentic learning experiences in vocational initiatives such as cooperative education, pre-apprenticeship, mentoring, shadowing, community service, etc.

- A career/transition plan will be developed by all students which indicates a career objective and identifies a planned course of study necessary for a successful transition.

- Tech Prep programs have been implemented in 140 school districts with an articulated sequence of academic and technical courses of study necessary for a successful transition.

- The Jobs for Kentucky Graduates Program has been funded in 27 districts to address the goals of KERA, drop-out prevention and school-to-work transition, by developing job readiness skills.

- The High Schools That Work Project has been implemented in 32 schools in Kentucky to advance the academic and technical competencies of high school graduates by establishing higher expectations and curricular and instructional improvement of vocational and academic education.

- Leadership, teamwork skills and community service are emphasized in vocational student organizations in each vocational program area including: FFA (agriculture), FBLA (business), FHA (home economics), DECA (marketing), TSA (technology education), VICA (industrial education) and HOSA (health occupations).

- Secondary vocational programs are available in 171 school districts offering programs in grades 7 through 12. Occupationally specific programs are also offered in 73 area vocational education centers. Secondary students in non-public schools have access to vocational programs.

- Kentucky is one of eight states that has received a school-to-work implementation grant application which will engage all secondary students in work-based and school-based activities to prepare them for high skill, high wage careers.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» **Get involved** in promoting career awareness and planning by assisting with career days/fairs or by being a guest speaker.

» **Serve** on advisory committees or task forces to identify skills that are necessary for the work place to be included in the curriculum.

» **Encourage** school-based decision making councils to support vocational programs with funds necessary for hands-on activities.

» **Talk** to teachers and students in vocational programs for their views of the programs.

» **Serve** as a judge for vocational student organization competitive events.

» **Write** to your elected state and federal officials with specific examples of success, encourage adequate funding for vocational programs and report any problems you have noted.

» **Attend** local school board meetings to ask about their responsibility for vocational programs.

» **Recognize** student achievements in vocational programs and the contributions of teachers and administrators.

» **Participate** in your local school-to-work partnership council or provide work-to-school learning opportunities for students participating in the program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 or the Cabinet for Workforce Development in Frankfort at (502) 564-6606.

Notes:

SUPPORT EDUCATION EXCELLENCE IN KENTUCKY

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) is the funding formula used to allocate state dollars to school districts.

- Local districts must participate in the SEEK program by raising no less than 30 cents per $100 assessed property evaluation or its equivalent (cable TV was added to utilities in 1990). The state provides additional funds to meet the minimum guaranteed amount.

- Guaranteed funds per pupil include $2,495 for 1994-95, and $2,570 for 1995-96. Additional support is provided for exceptional students, economically disadvantaged students and transportation. This is the base SEEK amount.

- Tier 1 allows districts to raise an additional 15 percent above the base without referendum, which is equalized to 150 percent of the state's average per pupil assessment.

- Tier 2 allows districts to raise an additional 30 percent above the base plus Tier 1, subject to referendum. This is not matched by the state and sets the cap or maximum allowed by law.

- The state provided districts no more than 25 percent over the previous year's state funds for 1990-91 and 1991-92 and no less than 8 percent for 1990-91 and 5 percent 1991-92. There is no guaranteed minimum or maximum for the 1992-94 years. However a hold harmless clause adopted in 1992 and again in 1994 allows school districts to receive no less money per pupil than the previous year.

- The local districts must levy no less than an additional 5 cents to participate in the state School Facilities Construction program.

- Additional state funding is provided to school districts for:

  - preschool programs
  - extended school services
  - programs for gifted and talented students
  - professional development
  - technology
  - family resource and youth services centers
  - vocational programs and transportation
  - textbooks

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» If your school is managed by a school-based decision making council, **attend** council meetings and ask how the council will spend the monies they receive for instructional materials.

» **Attend** school board meetings and ask how much money your district received last year, what the money was spent for and what the plans are for current spending. For guidance in understanding school finance you may want to purchase **A School Budget Primer: Citizens' Guide to School Finance**, from The Prichard Committee. Call (800) 928-2111 for ordering information.

» **Volunteer** to serve on or assist the district Facility Planning Committee when one is appointed. Attend their meetings.

» If your school district has a Community Committee for Education, suggest that they study school finance in your district to learn more about it and find out what they could do to help. **If there is no Community Committee, form one.** Call (800) 928-2111 for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Call The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 or the Kentucky Department of Education Office of District Support Services, Division of Finance in Frankfort at (502) 564-3846.

Notes:

PROVISIONS FOR MINORITY AND AT-RISK STUDENTS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act makes provisions for minority and at-risk students through:
  - a commitment to provide **all** students with the opportunity to learn and to have high expectations for all students;
  - preschool programs;
  - primary school programs;
  - extended school services, and
  - family resource and youth services centers.
- Teacher in-service programs must include effective awareness and sensitivity training so teachers can motivate and nurture students of diverse cultures.
- Family Resource and Youth Services Center Advisory Councils must have adequate representation of parents of students represented in their schools.
- School fees must be waived for pupils who qualify for free and reduced school lunches.
- The SEEK funding formula provides extra dollars for students at risk of educational failure.
- Appointments to state board and commissions must include reasonable minority representation.
- Criteria for textbook selection must include the contributions from diverse ethnic contributors to society.
- The law requires superintendents to seek minority applicants when vacancies exist.
- The Education Professional Standards Board was required to develop a plan to attract and recruit minority students to the teaching profession. The following is a result of that plan:
  - a new Minority Education, Recruitment and Retention Division has been established in the Department of Education;
  - nineteen minority teachers graduated this year through the alternative certification program;
  - scholarship funds for minority teachers have doubled from $100,000 to $200,000 for the 1994-95 school year, and
  - ten new middle school and high school programs have been established to work with students early to encourage them to consider teaching as a career.

- In 1992 the legislature asked the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education to make recommendations about how to assure minority participation on school councils. In 1993, the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education submitted recommendations to the Legislative Research Commission relating to policies and procedures to insure minority representation on school councils. In the 1994 General Assembly, minority representation on school councils was assured in schools with 8 percent or more minority student enrollment.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» **Talk** with and encourage students from all backgrounds. See what they think about themselves and students from diverse cultures. Encourage all students, but especially at-risk and minority students.

» **Recognize** the diverse needs of learners including academic, social, socioeconomic, gender and cultural.

» **Look for and encourage** the use of instructional materials that are accurate and free of stereotypes.

» **Include** persons from all backgrounds on school or community committees.

» **Suggest** persons from various cultural groups who might share information with your child's class.

» If you observe that your child's school is not sensitive to the needs of diverse students, suggest an awareness workshop. Call the Kentucky Department of Education for more information (502) 564-6916.

» **Sponsor** a school social event that involves families from different cultures to share foods, customs and so on.

» **Encourage** minority students to consider teaching as a career.

» If your school is operating with a school-based decision making council, **encourage** minority candidates to run for council positions and participate on council committees. Ask the council how they will incorporate minority issues and contributions in their school plan.

» **Encourage** parents of minority and at-risk students to join the PTA/PTO. If your school does not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help (502) 564-4378.

» **Ask** your superintendent how your district encourages minority applicants.

» **Visit** your schools. Look at textbooks, library books, magazines and other materials to see how they include information about and contributions from persons of diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Encourage schools to include such information.

» **Attend** the conference on multicultural issues sponsored by the Department of Education in June 1995. Call (502) 564-3085 or (800) KDE-KERA for registration information.

» **Attend** the Kentucky Education Reform African-American and At-Risk Children's Caucus conference on tracking in October 1994 and/or their annual conference in the spring. Call (502) 585-1960 for more information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Contact The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform, (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849), the Multicultural Opportunities Branch, of the Department of Education at (502) 564-3085 or the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights, (800) 292-5566.

Notes:

Notes:

HIGH SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING

THE BASICS OF THE LAW...

- The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 requires that schools will be held accountable for student learning as well as for graduation rates and the proportion of students who make a successful transition to work, post-secondary education or the military.

- KERA also required the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education to review graduation requirements considering the new expected outcomes prior to the beginning of the 1994-95 school year.

- In July 1992 the State Board asked the Department of Education to appoint a High School Restructuring Task Force composed of educators and citizens to recommend ways to change schools to help more students meet the new goals and to consider high school graduation requirements.

- The Task Force completed its work and presented a final report to the State Board in July 1993. That report was accepted to be used in pilot schools but was not adopted as a requirement for all schools.

THIS YEAR ('94-95) WATCH FOR...

- Sixty-seven high schools are participating as pilot restructuring sites. Twenty-seven schools are comprehensive restructuring sites. They will be addressing:

  - individual graduation plans;
  - integrated academic portfolios;
  - student-initiated culminating projects;
  - school-sponsored and-approved activities, and
  - exit reviews.

  Forty schools are partial restructuring sites and will address at least one of these components.

DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS WATCH FOR...

- More high schools will become restructuring sites.

- If plans go as currently recommended, the first class of students who will need to meet the new requirements will enter ninth grade during the 1997-98 school year and will graduate in 2001.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP...

» **Learn** as much as you can about high school restructuring.

» **Talk** with high school teachers, principals and students.

» **Attend** informational meetings on high school restructuring to be held this fall in your region. Call (502) 564-2116 for more specific information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Contact The Prichard Committee and The Partnership for Kentucky School Reform at (800) 928-2111 (Lexington area 233-9849), the Department of Education, High School Restructuring/Division of School Improvement, (502) 564-2116 or (800) KDE-KERA.

Notes: